



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH**
hope. recovery. wellbeing.



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES SUPERVISOR • FOURTH DISTRICT

JANICE HAHN

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Los Angeles County is Ready for Launch of National 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

LOS ANGELES — Beginning tomorrow, Saturday, July 16, people nationwide who are experiencing a mental health crisis and in need of immediate help will be able to dial or text 988 and receive assistance through the new Suicide and Crisis Lifeline number. As the lead agency in developing a seamless roll out of 988, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) has been preparing for this launch for more than a year to ensure operational logistics and response teams are in place to enable Los Angeles County community members to call 988 and receive immediate help during a mental health crisis.

“988 is a game changer,” said **Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn**, who has championed the County’s preparation for the 988 hotline. “Starting this weekend, anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or who has loved one that is in trouble can dial this short, easy to remember number and get connected to help.”

“We are excited for the nationwide roll out of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline number, which will make it easier for people experiencing or affected by mental health crises to get immediate life-saving help to support their safety and well-being. A key component of this new service is the availability of trained psychiatric mobile crisis response teams who can be connected to through the 988 line when necessary,” said **Lisa Wong, Psy.D., Acting Director of Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health**. “LACDMH is also proud to continue our partnership with Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services, which will serve as the 988 provider in L.A. County, to provide this crucial resource to our residents and communities, now accessible by simply calling or texting 988.”

L.A. County’s 988 Call Center Launches this Weekend

Starting this weekend, a new 988 Call Center operated by Didi Hirsch will be ready to take calls coming into the 988 hotline in Los Angeles County. Trained operators will triage callers to receive the appropriate services, including suicide crisis counseling over the phone and mental health de-escalation counseling over the phone. They will also triage callers to determine when dispatching a mobile crisis team is appropriate and, in rare cases, connection to law enforcement when safety is of concern.

Mobile Response Teams Increased

In preparation for the launch of 988, L.A. County has increased the number of teams of mental health professionals available to respond in-person to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. The L.A. County Department of Mental Health now operates Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams (PMRT) that consist of unarmed mental health workers who respond in person to people in crisis. These teams operate between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 a.m. In the coming weeks, L.A. County will be expanding the number of PMRTs available and launching new Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams (MCOTs) that will supplement them by providing crisis response outside of PMRT hours, making the services available 24/7. Both PMRTs and MCOTs will be connected to through the 988 Call Center.

“In some cases, talking to a professional on the phone won’t be enough,” said **Supervisor Janice Hahn**. “That is why it is so important that we have teams of mental health professionals across the County who can drive out directly to a person in crisis, deescalate situations, and connect people with long-term help. We need to expand these teams so that we have enough to respond to every mental health crisis across the County where they could be helpful and get there quickly so that it is a viable alternative to 911.”

About The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH)

As the nation’s largest public mental health department, we ensure access to care and treatment for our most vulnerable residents in a region with more than 10 million people. With an annual budget approaching \$3B and a committed staff of 6,000, LACDMH embodies a “heart-forward” approach to supporting hope, recovery and wellbeing across the County. For more information, visit dmh.lacounty.gov or follow @LACDMH on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

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